

Message Text

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SUBJECT:OECD TOXICS TESTING MEETING, WASHINGTON, FEB.21-24

1. DURING THE NOVEMBER 1977 SESSION OF THE OECD CHEMICALS GROUP THE US OFFERED TO HOST MEETINGS OF THE SIX EXPERT GROUPS ON CHEMICALS TESTING. THE CHAIRMEN OF FIVE GROUPS (STEP SEQUENCE - SWEDEN; LONG-TERM TOXICOLOGY - US; SHORT-TERM TOXICOLOGY - UNITED KINGDOM; PHYSICAL CHEMICAL PROPERTIES - FRG; AND PERSISTENCE/BIODEGRADATION-JAPAN) HAVE ALREADY CONFIRMED THEIR ATTENDANCE. PARTICIPANTS WILL BE AT THE EXPERT WORKING LEVEL. THE ONLY EXPERT GROUP NOT PARTICIPATING IS ECOTOXICOLOGY CHAIRED BY NETHERLANDS
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REPRESENTATIVE DR. H.J. HUECK. THE NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT CONTACT IS EB VAN JULSINGHA. (US POLICYMAKERS IN THE TOXIC SUBSTANCES FIELD (COSTLE, BLUM, JELLINEK) WILL ALSO SPEAK AT SUGGESTED JOINT SESSIONS.)

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING: ALTHOUGH A PRELIMINARY PLAN

FOR THE WORK OF THE GROUPS WAS CONSIDERED AT THE LAST MEETING OF THE OECD CHEMICALS GROUP THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT TIME TO REACH AGREEMENT ON HOW THE GROUPS SHOULD PROCEED TO MEET THEIR ASSIGNED GOALS. THE WASHINGTON MEETING IS DESIGNED TO FILL THAT GAP. HAVING ALL SIX GROUPS TOGETHER WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A COHERENT COMPRE-

HENSIVE STRATEGY TOWARD INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION OF TESTING WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT THE GROUP'S APPROACHES ARE COMPLEMENTARY AND NOT DUPLICATIVE. THIS MEETING WILL LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS OF THE SIX GROUPS.

3. ANOTHER OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING IS TO EXCHANGE UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON NATIONAL PROCEDURES IN TESTING OF CHEMICALS FOR POTENTIAL HAZARD. THE VARIOUS US AGENCIES WITH RELEVANT TESTING PROGRAMS PLAN TO PRESENT AND EXPLAIN THEIR APPROACHES. THE MEETING WILL ALSO CLARIFY THE TESTING STRATEGIES PROPOSED BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS. IN THIS REGARD WE BELIEVE THAT NETHERLANDS ABSENCE WOULD LEAVE A SERIOUS GAP SINCE IT HAS LEAD RESPONSIBILITY AND HAS EXTENSIVE EXPERTISE IN ECOTOXICOLOGY.

4. DURING 1977 A SERIES OF MEETINGS WERE HELD IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH CONSIDERED VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO ECOTOXICOLOGICAL TESTING. ARGUMENTS WERE CONSIDERED FOR VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THE EXTRAPOLATION OF TEST RESULTS AMONG SPECIES, THE EXTENT OF TERRESTRIAL, UNCLASSIFIED

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MARINE AND FRESHWATER INVOLVEMENT IN TESTS, THE SENSITIVITY OF NONHUMAN SPECIES, THE USE OF SHORT-TERM VERSUS LONG-TERM TESTS, ETC. THE KEY DECISIONS CONCERNING THE USE OF ECOTOXICOLOGY TESTS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE UNITED STATES INITIATE DISCUSSIONS THAT WILL LEAD TO FORMULATION OF REGULATORY POLICY. IN THIS REGARD DR. H.J. HUECK PRESENTED A VERY WELL DEVELOPED CONCEPT OF ECOTOXICOLOGY TESTING AT THE BERLIN MEETING IN SEPTEMBER.

5. REQUEST EMBASSY DISCUSS WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS THE POSSIBILITY OF DR. H.J. HUECK CONVENING AN INFORMAL MEETING OF HIS OECD ECOTOXICOLOGY GROUP AT THE WASHINGTON MEETING IN ORDER TO DISCUSS US VIEWS ON THIS TOPIC. IF DR. HUECK IS RELUCTANT TO INVITE OECD MEMBERS FROM OTHER CAPITALS, WE BELIEVE USEFUL DISCUSSIONS COULD TAKE PLACE BETWEEN HIM AS CHAIRMAN OF ECOTOXICOLOGY GROUP AND US COLLEAGUES. VANCE

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